

Philippians 4: [1] Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved.

1. The Challenge to Stand Fast

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Because of Possible Defeat and Defection

Paul begins this chapter with "*therefore*."

Paul has been writing that our citizenship is in heaven and that our conduct should match our citizenship. We are brothers and sisters in Christ. We are family.

Paul says that the church is his joy and crown. A crown is the results of victory.

Paul is speaking about God's power to save us and links it to man's problems.

You see there are 4 deadly problems in the church, defeat, discord, division and discouragement. Paul is going to deal with all 4.

Paul says we must stand fast when we are confronted by man's problems as a good soldier.

When confronted by an enemy, a soldier does not fall back into defeat, discouragement and despair.

The soldier stands fast.

In fact when we can't stand fast, we can stand fast "*in the Lord*."

Eph 6:11-14

[11] Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

[12] For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

[13] Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

[14] Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;

We must realize that we will be challenged to see if we will stand.

A. Stand Fast in Faith

1 Cor 16:13 Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.

B. Stand Fast in Fellowship

Phil 1:27 that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;

C. Stand Fast in Freedom

Gal 5:1 Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

D. Stand Fast in our Foundation

2 Thes 2:15 Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.

E. Stand Fast in our Family

Phil 4:1 Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved.

Philippians 4:[2] I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord.

2. The Challenge to Serenity

2 Because of Potential Discord

Women have always been important to the work of God. In many Churches, there are far more women than there are men. In the average Church you will find that there are more women that are workers in the Church than men.

Paul writes about 2 women in the church that were squabbling, quarreling and feuding. Imagine being called down from the pulpit or worse being warned in scripture in front of all.

* We are a lot like porcupines in the winter time trying to huddle together to stay warm. We need each other but as we draw close we needle each other!

These women were allowing their personal discord to cause broken fellowship. In fact, these are women that are saved, according to verse 3. These women have allowed their situation to cause public disruption in the church.

Eph 4:30-31

[30] And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

[31] Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:

Paul says "*I beseech thee Euodias and Syntyche.*"
To beseech is to entreat, and to prayerfully encourage.
Paul warns these women to put their problems behind them.

Col 3:13

[13] Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.

To forbear is to tolerate and to put up with.
To forgive is to lay it down and never pick it up again.

Luke 6:37

[37] Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven:

1 Cor 13:5

Charity...*5 Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;*

Philippians 4: [3] And I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellowlabourers, whose names are in the book of life.

Paul realizes that people in the church are choosing sides in the disagreement of these 2 women.

Paul encourages the "*true yokefellow*", those who are partners in service to the Lord.

Paul encourages the church to build fellowship rather than break fellowship.

Remember a yoke will hold oxen together and cause them to work together.

The yoke will cause persons to pull together and cooperate.

Don't pour gas on the fire, put it out.

Paul reminds the church that there are many women who are a blessing to the work of God.

"A good thing to remember

And a better thing to do

Is to work with the construction gang

And not the wrecking crew."

Philippians 4: [4] Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.

4. The Challenge to Steady Rejoicing

4

Because of Potential Discouragement

Paul says "*rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.*"

A. The Christian has a Commanded Activity

"Rejoice in the Lord."

Someone once said "I'm too blessed to be depressed."

Rejoicing is a great antidote to defection, disunity, division, and discouragement.

We must learn to count our blessings.

Ps 150:6 Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD.

Ps 118:24 This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.

* One church was given helium balloons to release when they felt like expressing joy.

When the service was over only 25% had released their balloons.

Oh, how we need to let our balloons go!

B. The Christian has a Continual Appointment

"Always."

Our rejoicing is to be perpetual and continual.

Ps 71:8 Let my mouth be filled with thy praise and with thy honour all the day.

Ps 119:64 Seven times a day do I praise thee because of thy righteous judgments.

Paul rejoiced in the prison cell, even awaiting a potential death sentence as he wrote.

* A kettle is up to its neck in hot water, but it still sings.

* Anyone can rejoice when things are going well.

But it takes a real Christian to rejoice when things are going bad.

C. The Christian has a Confident Attitude

"And again I say, Rejoice."

You see Jesus is the object and subject of our rejoicing.
He is worthy!

Rev 4:10-11

[10] The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying,

[11] Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

Luke 10:20

[20] Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.

1 Thes 5:18

[18] In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

Philippians 4: [5] Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.

Concl: *"Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand."*

Moderation is to be agreeable, reasonable, yielding to show consideration.

It is the absence of rudeness, rage and revenge. The Lord is watching, we must be an example.

* For many years Monterey, a California coast town, was a pelican's paradise. As the fishermen cleaned their fish, they flung the leftovers to the pelicans. The birds grew fat, lazy, and contented. Eventually, however the leftovers were utilized to make another product, and there were no longer any snacks. When the change came, the pelicans made no effort to fish for themselves. They waited around and grew gaunt and thin. Many starved to death. They had forgotten how to fish for themselves. The problem was solved by importing new pelicans, birds accustomed to getting food for themselves. They were placed among their starving cousins, and the newcomers immediately started catching fish. Before long, the hungry pelicans followed suit, and the famine was ended

We need some Christians to return to the old paths!